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THE
NARRAGANSETT COUNTRY

Glimpses of the Past

BY

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PROVIDENCE: MDCCCCXXVII

TO

A Lover of the Narragansett Country

HENRY DEXTER SHARPE

FOREWORD

The following chapters on the Narragansett country were given as radio talks from the Lincoln Studios (WLSI), Providence, Rhode Island, on the first three Thursdays of June, 1926. Their purpose was to awaken a fresh interest in this beautiful and historic region. Assurances from many listeners that they were successful in doing so have prompted their publication in a form addressed to the eye. If this little book shall be the cause of sending its readers to more original sources of information, or, still better, to the Narragansett country itself, its modest purpose will have been accomplished.

H. L. K.

July 1, 1926.

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THE EARLY DAYS

WE Americans are so accustomed to think of our different States as political units that we are apt to conceive of them as natural divisions. As a matter of fact not one, not even California or Florida, forms a genuine natural division. Rhode Island may be called a happy accident, for the hills of Connecticut roll on regardless of political bounds, cross Narragansett Bay, and finally are lost in the Ocean with their last representative, Captain's Hill, Duxbury, uplifting the statue of Miles Standish. It is in view of the existence of Narragansett Bay running up some twenty-five miles into the land, and more especially in view of the historical and economic development of the State during the last three hundred years, that Rhode Island can claim a place of its own on the map. The poet Cowper lamented that: "Lands intersected by a narrow frith abhor each other." Narragansett Bay furnishes an excellent example of such a frith or fiord; and, while the people on the opposite sides of the bay can hardly be said to abhor each other, their history has been more like that of their neighbor States than of each other. Rhode Island on the east of Narragansett Bay is virtually an extension of the Pilgrim

country, and its life has been an extension of the Pilgrim life. The first child born to the Pilgrims became a citizen of that region, as did the daughter of John Alden and Priscilla. The people of that country, like the Pilgrims, represent the more lovely, but still serious side of the Puritan nature. The west shore of the bay was as different from the east in its development as the South of the United States from the North. Indeed, allowing for differences in agriculture, the early west shore of Narragansett Bay, with its great employment of negro slaves and its development of a land-holding aristocracy, might well be called a bit of Virginia set down in New England. This Narragansett country corresponds to the old South County and extends from Pottowomutt Neck to Point Judith and Watch Hill. Had it produced a great novelist, instead of its great artist, Gilbert Stuart, this section of Rhode Island might have been as famous in literature as the Scotland of the Waverley novels, but it still lacks what more favored portions of America found in Cooper, Hawthorne, and Longfellow, a famous writer to give it a place on the map of literature. In reviewing some of the elements of interest in this romantic region, I shall begin with its early contacts of the whites with the red men, and try to outline some features of that dramatic story.

Among all the early colonists, Roger Williams stands out for one quality which alone would make him remembered unto this day, his knowledge of the Indian character and language. Instead of attempting to make over the Indians into a poor type of English, Williams conceived that they were the real owners of the country, and had a perfect right to live on their lands and maintain their own habits. He sought simply and beautifully to do

them good. He recognized their limitations, but he also recognized their right to them, to live their shiftless lives until they could be made to see a more excellent way. As he was a clergyman, his first interest was naturally to christianize them, and so far as the Indians were concerned, this may be called his life's great interest. To carry it out he must first learn their language. As he tells us in one of his letters, "God was pleased to give me a painful patient spirit to lodge with them in their filthy, smoky holes (even while living at Plymouth and Salem) to gain their tongue;" so that, in his first coming to Narragansett he "could understand with a great measure their own language". In a little volume written in the Narragansett country he says, "The most of it was penn'd and writ in the thickest of the naked Indians of America in their very wild houses and by their barbarous fires". I might remark in passing that Roger Williams not only learned the Indian language but he put down what he learned in a volume entitled "A Key into the Language of America," and that this volume forms the most scientific record that we have of the Indian language of New England, being more trustworthy than Eliot's translation of the Bible into Indian. His attainments in this language were early known in both Boston and Plymouth.

Being dissatisfied with the religious situation in England, Williams had come to America, landing in Boston early in 1631. Instead of finding religious liberty, he found a theocracy dominating the Bay Colony, in other words an oligarchy of the ministry; but he secured an appointment as the assistant to the pastor in Salem. After a few months, however, he was obliged to give up this place and removed to Plymouth. There he lived for

two years, preaching and tilling the soil. In 1633 he was recalled to his old parish in Salem, but his assertion that church and state should be absolutely separate, his scruples regarding the taking of oaths, and, perhaps most offensive of all, his denial that the king had the right to give away the lands of the Indians, brought him into collision with the powers of the colony, and he was banished. It was decided to deport him back to England, but he made his escape, steering his course, as he said, to Narragansett Bay and the Indians. He was hospitably received by Massasoit at Warren, and in the spring he built and planted his corn on the east bank of the Seekonk. This was in the Plymouth territory, and the authorities of the Bay, hearing of it, put such pressure on the Pilgrims that they felt obliged to ask him, though very considerately, to shift his quarters to the west side of the Seekonk, where Providence now stands. So, losing his labor, he paddled down the Seekonk, around Fox Point, and up to a spot somewhat farther north than the site of the First Baptist Meeting House. In thankfulness for the divine protection which had brought him to this spot, he named his new settlement Providence.

Hardly had Roger Williams begun to settle himself in his new home, when he had an extraordinary opportunity to heap coals of fire on the heads of his persecutors. We must remember that at this time the Indians in New England greatly outnumbered the white men, that they occupied the whole country, except the few vantage points on the shore or near it held by the whites. The Pequots were the Connecticut Indians. They were suspected of having killed several white traders not long before, and about the time of Williams's settlement at

Providence, they killed an English trader off Block Island. Williams sent the news to his friend Governor Henry Vane at Boston, and the Bay Colony sent a force under John Endicott into the Pequot country to punish the Indians. The expedition did either too much or too little, its effect being very much like that of shooting a dart instead of a bullet into a lion. The Bay Colonists soon learnt that the Pequots were seeking to make allies of their eastern neighbors, the Narragansetts, for a united attack to destroy the whites. With these two powerful tribes acting together, such a result would not be unlikely. The Boston people had no recourse except to appeal to the man whom they had so recently banished, the one New Englander who was able to talk to the Indians in their own language; and so they besought Williams to prevent this alliance. What followed shall be told in Williams's own words, written long after to Major Mason:

"When the next year after my banishment, the Lord drew the bow of the Pequod war against the country, in which, Sir, the Lord made yourself, with others, a blessed instrument of peace to all New England, I had my share of service to the whole land in that Pequod business, inferior to very few that acted, for,

1. Upon letters received from the Governor and Council at Boston, requesting me to use my utmost and speediest endeavors to break and hinder the league labored for by the Pequods against the Mohegans, and Pequods against the English, (excusing the not sending of company and supplies, by the haste of the business,) the Lord helped me immediately to put my life into my hand, and, scarce acquainting my wife, to ship myself, all alone, in a poor canoe, and to cut through a stormy wind, with

great seas, every minute in hazard of life, to the Sachem's house.

2. Three days and nights my business forced me to lodge and mix with the bloody Pequod ambassadors, whose hands and arms, methought, wreaked with the blood of my countrymen, murdered and massacred by them on Connecticut river, and from whom I could not but nightly look for their bloody knives at my own throat also.

3. When God wondrously preserved me, and helped me to break to pieces the Pequods' negotiation and design, and to make, and promote and finish, by many travels and charges, the English league with the Narragansetts and Mohegans against the Pequods, and that the English forces marched up to the Narragansett country against the Pequods, I gladly entertained, at my house in Providence, the General Stoughton and his officers and used my utmost care that all his officers and soldiers should be well accommodated with us.

4. I marched up with them to the Narragansett Sachems, and brought my countrymen and the barbarians, Sachems and captains, to a mutual confidence and complacence, each in other.

5. Though I was ready to have marched further, yet, upon agreement that I should keep at Providence, as an agent between the Bay and the army, I returned, and was interpreter and intelligencer, constantly receiving and sending letters to the Governor and Council at Boston, &c., in which work I judge it no impertinent digression to recite (out of the many scores of letters, at times, from Mr. Winthrop,) this one pious and heavenly prophecy, touching all New England, of that gallant man, viz.:

'If the Lord turn away his face from our sins, and bless our endeavors and yours, at this time against our bloody enemy, we and our children shall long enjoy peace, in this, our wilderness condition.' And himself and some other of the Council motioned and it was debated, whether or no I had not merited, not only to be recalled from banishment, but also to be honored with some remark of favor. It is known who hindered, who never promoted the liberty of other men's consciences. These things, and ten times more, I could relate, to show that I am not a stranger to the Pequod wars and lands, and possibly not far from the merit of a foot of land in either country, which I have not."

So the dreaded alliance was prevented and the Bay Colony was saved; but Roger Williams was not even rewarded with the simple courtesy of having his banishment annulled. The Pequots rashly undertook the war alone, and were severely handled by the English, so severely that Williams, writing to Governor Winthrop in July shortly after the battle said, "I fear that some innocent blood cries at Connecticut".

How did our first settlers support themselves? There were really only three sources of living open to them,—farming, fishing, and trading. Every man was likely to have to perform any kind of labor. Even men bred to a trade, like carpenters, blacksmiths, and ship-wrights, would most of the time be following the primitive occupations of tilling the soil and fishing. This condition naturally lasted until the colonists became populous enough to demand and supply a division of labor. But the third source of income was traffic with the Indians, in the one article which the Indians had to supply that was in demand both at home and abroad, namely furs. So the

business of Indian trader developed, the trader supplying the Indians with whatever they wanted and taking from them their staple of trade won by hunting and trapping.

Roger Williams with his knowledge of the Indian language was particularly well fitted for this trade, and so for six years he lived in the Narrrgansett country, still keeping his citizenship in Providence, but spending his time at what is now called Wickford, but was called by him Cawcawmsqussick. He sometimes dates his letters from Narragansett and sometimes uses the less familiar name. He made his headquarters there between his two visits to London, that is between 1645 and 1651. There he wrote his Experiments of Spiritual Life and Health already referred to, and also his second great volume against persecution. There he had for neighbor another trader, the famous Richard Smith, whose "castle" or "fortress" is represented by a later block house that is still standing. As an illustration of the scanty supplies of familiar articles among the whites as well as the Indians, it is interesting to note that Williams in a letter to Governor Winthrop of Connecticut adds this postscript, "Hearing of the want of pins, I crave Mrs. Winthrop's acceptance of two small papers, that if she want not herself, yet she may pleasure a neighbor." It should be noted that he refused to sell the Indians articles like coats and breeches and especially strong drink, all which he thought would disnature them.

Gold had been the great prize of the Spaniards in Mexico, and the English were all the time seeking for precious metals in their territories. While Roger Williams was at Narragansett, the news flew over the colony that gold and silver had been discovered on the island of

Rhode Island. Williams sent some bags of ore to Governor Winthrop in the belief that it had been tested and found genuine. It was perhaps fortunate for the colony that the rumor proved false.

Just before he left his trading post, Williams had an opportunity again to play the part of a peacemaker, which was one of his life's great roles. The English demanded the remainder due of an amount of wampum, that is, Indian shell money, and the soldiers were on the point of enforcing the payment by an attack. This Williams prevented by inducing the captain to stay at his house four days and the natives at the same time to bring in the necessary wampum, he himself paying ten fathoms of the wampum as he had once before paid twenty fathoms, though, as he confessed, it was far beyond his ability to contribute. For this intervention he received the hearty thanks of Governor Winthrop of Connecticut. The service was one that only Williams could have performed, because no other man of equal tact knew the Indian language. He says that had the two races come to blows, many a planter would have been dispossessed and his plantation destroyed, with much blood and slaughter and ruin to both English and Indians. Still the evil day was only postponed, but it was postponed until a time when the English were able to defend themselves.

Twenty-four years later the conflict known as King Philip's War broke out. Up to this time the Pilgrim treaty had been faithfully kept on both sides. Now, as the result of various incidents, King Philip, the chief of the Wampanoags, felt himself forced into war. The people of Rhode Island were now in great part Quakers, and so on principle were opposed to war. They feared

an alliance between the Wampanoags on the east and the Narragansetts on the west. Again Williams did his best to prevent a junction; his diplomacy was apparently successful, but he came back no longer confident; and almost on his heels one hundred armed Narragansetts appeared in Warwick. Williams saw no choice but for the whites to subdue by force the Indians for whom he had labored so long. In the winter of 1675 the Narragansett country became a battle ground. The Indians had entrenched themselves in what is called the Great Swamp in South Kingstown. Here they would naturally be safe, but, unfortunately for them, the swamp froze over, the English attacked them, and the Indians were slain or captured. With the killing of Philip near Mount Hope in the following August, the power of the Indians was forever crushed. Hardly a hundred Narragansetts survived, and these were enslaved, but to the credit of Rhode Island, be it said, only for a limited term. So with the end of this terrible war the fear of danger from the Indians passed away from the Narragansett country. The inhabitants were at last able to hold and develop their possessions in security.

In spite of the wholesome air which Roger Williams found in the Narragansett country, its inhabitants, like the early settlers in general, had their ailments, and in the absence of physicians they developed a great store of household remedies. There is nothing that seems stranger to us than these old New England medicines, but it is possible that two hundred years hence most of our remedies will be looked upon as being, if not so absurd, at least as unfamiliar. It was customary to cut the ear for a toothache. For earache there is a report that the end of a cat's tail held in the ear was a sovereign remedy.

Eye troubles seem to have been common; one of the remedies for them was "faire running water, white sugar candy, white copperis, white rose water," "the herb eye bright," with the "oyle of snailes". The application is made by dropping in each eye. In all ages during epidemics men have sought for something that would not only cure the disease but would ward it off; here is one for pestilential diseases: "an handful of rue and a handful of sage," to be "boyled in a quart of sack or muscadine," adding "a nutmeg, and as much ginger or long peper, well beaten small together, then boyle it againe a little more, and add about two spoonfuls of balme water, and half the quantity of a nutmegg of mitridate, and of treacle, of all which take a spoonful to prevent and two to remove ye malady".

"An ach in the shoulder or elsewhere" may be cured by an application of "oyle of marsh mallows, raisons of the sun, and figgs," with mustard seed. When ground in "a mustard quarn, with good wine vinegar, spread it upon a lamb's skin and lay it on the place grieved, and it will cure." Here is "a medicine to cure the rickitts". It is a mixture of white wine, "two nuttmegs greated," with white sugar candy, saffron, and the shells of "two new layd eggs". Of this "give the child that is grieved a spoonful or two every night and morning, according to the strength of the child".

Jaundice appears to have afflicted our ancestors more than it does ourselves; here is a remedy that we feel certain will hurt no one, because no one will try it: "Take a piece of Casteel Soape and slice it into thin pieces and put ym into half a pint of water and let it dissolve and drink it 2 or 4 times." One of their elixirs is asserted to

"comfort ye senses, revive ye spirits, bear up ye heart, and make ye sick pleasant. To be taken in wine." Here is one that ought to empty some of our hospitals: "Powder of Earthworms taken fasting before and after ye change and full of ye moon cures apoplexies and epilepsies."

Before we pass on to the more romantic middle period of the Narragansett country, let us take a parting glance at the Indian inhabitants of this beautiful region as they were seen through the kindly eyes of one of their best friends. In his famous Key, Roger Williams, in the midst of a list of native words, often stops to make comments on various matters relating to the life of the Indians. Here are some of them.

As to the number of their towns he says, "In the Nariganset Countrey (which is the chief people in the Land:) a man shall come to many Townes, some bigger, some lesser, it may be a dozen in 20. miles Travell."

He has this to say of one of their principal articles of diet: "Parch'd meal which is a readie very wholesome food, which they eate with a little water, hot or cold; I have travelled with neere 200. of them at once, neere 100. miles through the woods, every man carrying a little Basket of this at his back, and sometimes in a hollow Leather Girdle about his middle sufficient for a man three or foure daies: With this readie provision, and their Bow and Arrowes, are they ready for War, and travell at an houres warning. With a spoonfull of this meale and a spoonful of water from the Brooke, have I made many a good dinner and supper."

He speaks of their smoking, "Which some doe not, but they are rare Birds; for generally all the men throughout the Countrey have a Tobacco-bag, with a pipe in it,

hanging at their back: sometimes they make such great pipes, both of wood and stone, that they are two foot long, with men or beasts carved, so big or massie, that a man may be hurt mortally by one of them; but these commonly come from the Mauquáuwogs, or the Men eaters, three or foure hundred miles from us: They have an excellent Art to cast our Pewter and Brasse into very neate and artificiall Pipes: They take their Wuttam-mauog (that is, a weake Tobacco) which the men plant themselves, very frequently; yet I never see any take so excessively, as I have seene men in Europe; and yet excesse were more tolerable in them, because they want the refreshing of Beare and Wine, which God hath vouchsafed Europe."

The Indians thought being unpunctual was equivalent to telling a lie, as Williams says: "They are punctuall in their promises of keeping time; and sometimes have charged mee with a lye for not punctually keeping time, though hindred."

They were great runners. Williams says: "I have knowne many of them run between fourescoure or an hundred miles in a Summers day, and back within two dayes: they doe also practice running of Races; and commonly in the Summer, they delight to go without shoes, although they have them hanging at their backs: they are so exquisitely skilled in all the body and bowels of the Countrey (by reason of their huntings) that I have often been guided twentie, thirtie, sometimes fortie miles through the woods, a streight course, out of any path."

New England is colder than old England, he says, but "The pure wholsomnesse of the Aire is wonderfull, and the warmth of the Sunne, such in the sharpest weather,

that I have often seen the Natives Children runne about starke naked in the coldest dayes, and the Indians Men and Women lye by a Fire, in the Woods in the coldest nights, and I have been often out my selfe such nights without fire, mercifully, and wonderfully preserved."

He says of the strawberry: "This Berry is the wonder of all the Fruits growing naturally in those parts: It is of it selfe Excellent: so that one of the chiefest Doctors of England was wont to say, that God could have made, but God never did make a better Berry: In some parts where the Natives have planted, I have many times seen as many as would fill a good ship within a few miles compasse: the Indians bruise them in a Morter, and mixe them with meale and make Strawberry bread." The Pilgrims speak in the same way of the size and abundance of these berries.

The Indians loved to work in common. "The Women set or plant, weede, and hill, and gather and barne all the corne, and Fruites of the field: Yet sometimes the man himselfe, (either out of love to his Wife, or care for his Children, or being an old man) will help the Woman which (by the custome of the Countrey,) they are not bound to. When a field is to be broken up, they have a very loving sociable speedy way to dispatch it: All the neighbours men and Women forty, fifty, a hundred &c, joyne, and come in to help freely. With friendly joyning they breake up their fields, build their Forts, hunt the Woods, stop and kill fish in the Rivers, it being true with them as in all the World in the Affairs of Earth or Heaven: By concord little things grow great, by discord the greatest come to nothing."

He then describes a canoe: "An Indian Boat, or Canow made of a Pine or Oake, or Chestnut-tree: I have seene a Native goe into the woods with his hatchet, carrying only a Basket of Corne with him, & stones to strike fire when he had feld his tree (being a chesnut) he made him a little House or shed of the bark of it, he puts fire and followes the burning of it with fire, in the midst in many places: his corne he boyles and hath the Brooke by him, and sometimes angles for a little fish: but so hee continues burning and hewing untill he hath within ten or twelve dayes (lying there at his worke alone) finished, and (getting hands,) lanched his Boate; with which afterward hee ventures out to fish in the Ocean. It is wonderfull to see how they will venture in those Canoes, and how (being oft overset as I have my selfe been with them) they will swim a mile, yea two or more safe to Land: I having been necessitated to passe waters diverse times with them, it hath pleased God to make them many times the instruments of my preservation: and when sometimes in great danger I have questioned safety, they have said to me: Feare not, if we be overset I will carry you safe to Land."

Roger Williams in the course of his volume indulges in poetry. In the following lines he describes the hospitality of the Indians and expresses his gratitude to the dark-skinned savages for feeding him when he had been banished by his fellow-countrymen.

Course bread and water's most their fare,
O Englands diet fine;
Thy cup runs ore with plenteous store
Of wholesome beare and wine.

Sometimes God gives them Fish or Flesh,
  Yet they're content without;
And what comes in, they part to friends
  And strangers round about.

God's providence is rich to his,
  Let none distrustfull be;
In wildernesse, in great distresse,
  These Ravens have fed me.

II

THE AGE OF ROMANCE

AFTER the Great Swamp Fight and the death of King Philip had put an end to the danger of Indian troubles, the Narragansett country settled down to a steady development. It was a region whose ownership was curiously disputed. The original Connecticut claim, had it been maintained, would virtually have wiped it off the map of Rhode Island. Two great land companies, one headed by John Hull, the Boston goldsmith, and the other by Humphrey Atherton, were those most concerned in making good their claims. In the rest of New England the system of landholding in vogue was that of the individual farmer and his family. In that case two hundred acres, divided into field, pasture and woodlot, would represent as large a holding as could ordinarily be worked, and indeed much larger than many farmers possessed. In the Narragansett country, however, as in the South and in early New York, the system was more like that which the traveller sees in operation on the great Ranches of the far West.

The planters of the Narragansett country measured their holdings less by acres than by square miles. The Richard Smith grant comprised about 27 square miles. The Robert Hazard grant included some 20 square miles. Others had estates of nearly this extent. It is obvious that under such circumstances labor must be brought in

to do the work of these enormous plantations. For the most part this was the labor of negro and Indian slaves. The situation was therefore closely parallel to that of the Southern states, but, owing to the difference in climate, their products were not the same. "The Narragansett wealth was derived not so much from the cultivation of any great staple such as tobacco, cane or cotton, as from the product of their dairies, their flocks of sheep, and their droves of splendid horses, the once famous Narragansett pacers."

This famous breed of horses is mentioned in Cooper's "Last of the Mohicans" as characteristic of the pre-Revolutionary times. The original of this breed is said to have been imported by Governor William Robinson from Andalusia in Spain. They were specifically riding horses, and owing to their peculiar step, which advanced one side at a time instead of with alternate sides like the step of the trotting horse, their gait was so even that at full speed a Narragansett pacer could carry a pail of water on his back without spilling a drop. Moreover, a pacer could travel a hundred miles without tiring himself or his rider. The breed died out in consequence of the breaking up of the breeding farms and the destruction of the horses by the British during the Revolutionary War. Some of the finest modern race horses have been pacers, but they were not of this old historic breed.

In this land of great estates luxury and hospitality went hand in hand. The work, both indoors and out, was done chiefly by slaves. The size of the establishments of that day is illustrated by the fact that one of these great land owners congratulated himself that he had reduced the number of his household servants for parlor and kitchen

to seventy. These country gentlemen were fond of out-door sports, were perhaps hearty rather than elegant in their pleasures, and, like the English squires or the Southern planters, had a strict code of social rank. Kinship also was reckoned to the sixth degree, so that virtually everyone was related to everyone else. Perhaps the greatest occasion for hospitality and mirth was a wedding. We have a record of one marriage entertainment at the home of Nicholas Gardner in 1790 that was attended by six hundred guests. Christmas was a dearly loved festival, in distinction from its position in the calendar of the rest of New England, where its place was taken by Thanksgiving. The exercises were a reproduction, perhaps on a larger scale, of the Christmas week of old England. Dancing was not frowned upon as in the more Puritanical sections of New England, and the names of many of their dances have come down to us. Besides the Minuet there were Pea Straw, Boston's Delight, Haymaking, Lady Hancock, and I'll be Married in My Old Clothes. The slaves too had a share, and a large one, in this form of merrymaking, as the following incident will show. When the kitchen was removed from the old John Robinson house, sixty ox-cart loads of sand were taken from the space under the floor. This sand had been used in sprinkling the floor, and had literally been danced through the cracks between the boards by generations of jolly darkies.

Says Bacon, in his "Narragansett Bay": "What halls and parlours those were that could hold such an army of merrymakers; what dining-rooms that might have served for the mess-halls of regiments, and kitchens huge enough to supply the needs of such dining-rooms. Enormous

fire-places furnished heat for these great chambers. The logs that fed them were hauled in cord lengths and rested upon great andirons that would alone fill a meagre, modern fire-place. The 'fire dogs', as they were called, that furnished the kitchen hearth were provided with turned-up lips at convenient intervals, to hold the spit upon which fowl or joint was roasted. The crane hung in the chimney and beside it, built into the chimney wall, was the oven, big enough for a modern bake-shop.

It was no unusual thing then to hang upon the spit for roasting a quarter of lamb or a haunch of venison at the same time that turkeys, ducks, and fowl were being roasted. The food that came upon the planter's table was usually the product of his own prolific acres. If we are to believe the testimony of Rhode Island epicures there were no fruit nor vegetables in the world like Narragansett fruit and vegetables, no corn nor grain that could compare with Narragansett corn or grain, and no beef nor mutton, pork nor poultry, that were fit to be mentioned in the same day with those grown in that favoured region."

The history of slavery in Rhode Island represents in general the side to which Southerners at the present day are accustomed to look back in their traditions of the good old times; though there were instances which illustrate the unfortunate power that slavery placed in the hands of cruel masters. One great land-owner, Rowland Robinson, when a shipload of slaves was brought over from Africa, so pitied their wretched plight that he retained all his share and refused to sell any of them. So kind was he to his slaves that one of them, Abigail, who had been a queen in her own country, went back to Africa

to bring her son over to be a slave on the same estate. He came, received the name of Prince, and served faithfully for many years as the body-servant of his master.

A most extraordinary piece of indulgence toward the slaves by the land-owners of the Narragansett country was the Summer Festival of the negroes. The slaves of a district met on the third Saturday in June, when they held an annual election and chose their own Governor. Sometimes when the slaves were numerous, the election was held for a single town. They had the same party politics as the whites, and their airs corresponded to the wealth and power of their masters. In a sense the slave thus became a reflection of his master, and it was held necessary for him to play the part. During this period the land-owners gave up their horses to their slaves, even the best Narragansett pacers, gave them elegant clothing, powder and pomatum for their hair, and sometimes swords. Thus equipped, and with their wives riding behind them on pillions, they flocked from all sides to the election, which had been preceded by weeks of parliamenteering—what we call electioneering. This was followed by a dinner corresponding in extravagance to the wealth of the successful candidate's master. The newly elected Governor sat at the head of a long table set out under trees, with the defeated candidate on his right and his own wife on his left. The afternoon was given up to outdoor sports. So expensive were these festivals that Governor E. R. Potter told his servant, who had been elected Governor at the Festival, that one or the other of them must give up politics or the expense would ruin him.

Strange superstitions and practices grew up among the slaves, or lasted over from their life in Africa. We read

of an old negro fortune-teller, named Sylvy Tory, who long survived her master and his family and lived to the age of 104 years, even then dying by accident. One of her favorite means of fortune-telling was by examining the grounds in a tea cup. She made the tea with strange rites and ceremonies handed down from savagery; then she would shake the cup, and as she watched the contents slowly settle, she would reveal to her shuddering patroness her future fate. As a matter of fact, a village damsel had only to cross Sylvy's palm with a silver half dollar to learn that "your future husband will be dark but fair, you will have troubles, but all will finally come out right and you will live happy ever after in a fine home on a high hill with woods on one side of you and water on the other."

In a region like this in those early days when witches were supposed to be real, and especially with so large a negro and Indian population, it was inevitable that many places should be associated with tales of terror. In North Kingstown there grew up the story of a decapitated negro boy whom the belated traveller was likely to see surrounded with a blue flame. There was an even more interesting superstition of the ghostly skeleton of an Indian who had the habit of mislaying his head, and frightening nearly to death anyone who was so unfortunate as to find it. Once a road-mender happened to discover a skull lying by the side of the road; being something of a Hamlet, he picked up the skull and brought it home, to the great indignation of his wife, who refused to allow him to bring it into the house; so he stuck it on a pole at the back of the house, and thought no more about it; but just after midnight, with a full moon in the sky, a great clatter was heard, and out in the road stood

the headless skeleton rattling his bones in a grisly fashion. The road-mender's wife was frightened nearly to death, but her husband simply called out to the skeleton: "You will find your head stuck on a pole behind the house." Whereupon the skeleton recaptured his skull, clapped it on his soulders, and strode away. The legend has it that this was by no means his last appearance.

A belated clam-digger saw a ship of ancient design and rig, with all sail set, steering in the moonlight across a shoal where no ship could pass. From her mast flew a flag bearing a skull and cross bones; of course it was Captain Kidd's vessel. Indian Corner has not only the headless negro but a Bleeding Rock, which is supposed to commemorate the deadly battle once fought there between the whites and the Indians. The presence of iron in the stone doubtless had much to do with the phenomenon. Hopkins Hill in East Greenwich bears a boulder that is known as Witch's Rock. A daring farmer once swore that he would plough up the ground about this rock, but he had hardly started when the ploughshare stuck fast, the pin flew out of the yoke, and finally the ploughshare cracked. At this point a crow flew out of the woods and perching on a dead tree cawed in a terrifying manner. The farmer answered it with a volley of oaths, one of which must have had a magic effect, for the crow fell down upon the road, dropping from its mouth the pin that had disappeared from the ox yoke; then the crow suddenly changed to a witch with a peaked-crowned hat and a broom, nearly frightening the farmer out of his wits; next the witch herself vanished, and a black cat appeared on the top of the rock, from which she ran down into a hole at its base. The farmer tried to dig her out, but the

earth flew in as fast as he could shovel it away. The truth of this story is proved by a mark in the rock which was made by the farmer's ploughshare when it broke.

What is the most famous Rhode Island product? It may be the Rhode Island Reds, for everywhere one goes, from Atlantic to Pacific, one sees their familiar reddish-brown plumage; but I give my vote in favor of the Rhode Island Johnny-Cake. Shepard Tom, in his famous "Papers", tells how his father's negro cook prepared this delectable food. She insisted on having wind-ground Rhode Island meal. She sifted it through her finest sieve, scalded it with boiling water, adding either water or new milk, and carefully kneaded it on a wooden tray. She then took a johnny-cake board made of red oak, which was always the middle portion of a flour barrel top and was from five to six inches wide, and three-quarters of an inch thick. She took this board, placed the cake on it and rubbed its surface with sweet cream to keep it from blistering. She then set it upright before a green hardwood fire and left it until the main part of the cake was perfectly baked, when she tipped it by leaning it against the smooth face of a flat-iron, thus baking in turn the top and the bottom of the cake. When this side was done she removed the cake from the board with a knife, anointed the fresh surface with cream and exposed it to the fire, until finally this choicest article of human nature's daily food was done to perfection. As Josh Billings said, "I never ate one yet without thanking the Lord for that one and my landlady for another."

Some very remarkable love stories, both comedies and tragedies, have come down to us from the old Narragansett country, the romance of which would of course not be real

if it contained no love stories. I shall refer to three, a Quaker love story, the story of the first Narragansett heiress, and the tragic story of a great beauty. The Quakers were very numerous in Rhode Island, since they were not persecuted here, but they adopted one rule against "marrying out of the Meeting," which probably contributed more than any other cause to the falling away of this once prosperous society, so beautiful in its spiritual faith and many of its customs. Miss Caroline Hazard of Peace Dale, in her volume entitled "Anchors of Tradition", has told us the charming story of a Quaker over affair which turned out happily. It runs as follows:

JONATHAN PERRY'S DANCING

Extract from South Kingstown Monthly Meeting Records:

"1st Mo. 30th, 1757.

"It having been Reported to this Meeting that Jonathan Perry hath of late so far Disregarded the Rules of our Society as to attend a gathering where there was Music and vain Mirth, and further that the said Jonathan did there dance in a Light and Airy manner, our friends Joseph Collins, and Thomas Hazard are appointed to visit said Jonathan and inquire into his Conduct."

Jacob Perry to William Collins

So. Kingstown 2nd month 10th, 1757.

Esteemed Friend and Kinsman:

I write thee in heaviness of Heart, to entreat thee to warn thy Daughter. In truth she is a good Damsel, and fair to look upon. Bid her not resemble Delilah, that

false one, and betray the Strong to their Undoing. Two of our good friends have lately waited upon my son Jonathan for what cause I knew not. It now appears that about the First of the Year thy daughter was visiting thy Boston Neck relatives, the Gardners, and they had a gathering as is usual with them; Indulging in Practices forbidden by the Rules of our Society. My misguided son, instructed by thy daughter joined in the Dancing, and I am informed Excelled all the Young Men present. When asked to condemn his conduct he boldly justified it. Now I entreat thee instruct thy daughter as to the danger of her course in thus beguiling a young man from the Light of Truth. If he persists in his Obduracy he must be denied. I remember my dear Kinsman that such was thy fate and I warn him by thy example.

My love in thy freedom to all enquiring friends. Lewis Clarke carries this for me.

Thy affectionate Kinsman,
(Signed) Jacob Perry

To William Collins
At Providence
these

Henry Gardner to Alicia Collins.
So. Kingstown, February 10th, 1757.

Fair Cousin:

Having an opportunity to send to you by Lewis Clarke, I take my pen to give you our news. And first I protest I am Lonely, and Lost without you! The house is Desolate, the farm Forlorn. Winter has us in his clutch. The book you brought is my only solace and I can truly say with it,

'Now is the winter of our discontent.'

Our news are few, and for lack of better Material I must fill my letter with the account of a visit I made Jonathan Perry a few days since. My fair Cousin will remember him I trust? He is the awkward Quaker lad she taught to dance so well. In truth it was amazing, for he is a big fellow who will weigh nigh on to fourteen stone, and he is the only man here taller than I. But with such a teacher how could he but succeed, and Jim and Sambo played as I never heard them when you two danced together. Pangs of jealousy seized me, and would torment me still but that you also danced with me.

But friend Jonathan has not heard the end of his Dancing! Last week I spent the night at his house, for we were to go smelt fishing in the morning. The fish are running finely in the Saugatucket. Just as the afternoon waned, two horsemen alighted, and from the gravity of their Demeanor it was evident they were on weighty Business. They were two Friends dispatched by the Meeting to enquire into Jonathan's conduct. My cousin can fancy the consternation of Friend Perry and his wife. My friend Jonathan was calm, and listened to their discourse, when he boldly declared that he had done no harm nor received any, and when asked if he would do the like again declared he would a hundred times! In truth he is a lad of spirit! And me thinks that with his dancing you have taught him somewhat else! But enough. I never liked him so well, and should my fair cousin wish to give another Dancing lesson, she has but to issue her commands.

My love to my aunt and uncle.

Your loving cousin,

(Signed) Henry Gardner.

"Jonathan Perry to Alicia Collins.

South Kingstown, 2nd mo. 10, 1757.

Sweet Mistress of My Heart!

I had hoped to visit thee ere this, but having an opportunity now send these lines. Thou wilt remember the evening thou didst raise me to heavenly bliss? The Meeting is dealing with me for transgressing the rules, but I replied I have done no wrong, nor have I. My mother chides me, my father is angered. But if thou, my heart's Delight, continue thy favor, it matters not. My mother chides from a sense of Duty. I know her Heart. She has no daughters as thou knowest. Oh may it be mine to give her one.

Lewis Clarke is instructed to ask my sweetest Dear for a line in reply. Oh send it to thy devoted friend. Tell him thou dost not regret that happy eve and he will fly to thee.

Thy true lover for all time,

(Signed) Jonathan Perry."

Alicia Collins to Jonathan Perry.

"Providence, February 11, 1757.

My dear Friend:

I can only say I admire your Spirit and approve your Conduct. More becomes me not. If you are the man I believe you, I shall see you within a week. The rest can wait till then.

Your Friend,

(Signed) Alicia Collins."

Extract from South Kingstown Meeting Records:

"3rd Mo. 1st.

This meeting being informed that Jonathan Perry contrary to the Light of Truth hath married a woman not of

our Society, our Friends Jabez Collins and Peter Bull are appointed to inquire into that matter and report at our next monthly meeting."

The second story has been told inimitably by the great Hawthorne, but he appears not to have known the young lady's Christian name, which we will give correctly. Her father, Captain John Hull, was, as we have seen, one of the great early land-owners of the Narragansett country; but he was not a resident, since he lived in Boston and was the Mint-master of Massachusetts.

On the wedding day of his daughter with young Samuel Sewall, who afterwards became a famous judge, "when the marriage ceremony was over," as Hawthorne tells us, "Captain Hull whispered a word to two of his men servants, who immediately went out, and soon returned lugging in a large pair of scales.

'Daughter Hannah', said the mintmaster, 'get into one side of these scales.'

Miss Hannah—or Mrs. Sewall, as we must now call her—did as she was bid, like a dutiful child.

'And now,' said honest John Hull to the servants, 'Bring that box hither.'

The box to which the mintmaster pointed was a huge, square, iron bound, oaken chest. The servants could not lift this enormous receptacle, and were finally obliged to drag it across the floor. Captain Hull then took a key from his girdle, unlocked the chest, and lifted its ponderous lid. Behold! it was full to the brim of bright pine-tree shillings.

Then the servants, at Captain Hull's command, heaped double handfuls of shillings into one side of the scales,

while Hannah remained in the other, till, plump, and ponderous as she was, they fairly weighed the young lady from the floor.

'There, son Sewall!' cried the honest mintmaster, 'take these shillings for my daughter's portion. Use her kindly, and thank Heaven for her. It is not every wife that's worth her weight in silver.' "

The third story is tragic, but much beloved and often told at the firesides of the Narragansett country. It contains a lesson for both parents and children. It is here given in condensed form. It may be read in full as told by Shepherd Tom Hazard in his "Recollections" or by Alice Morse Earle in her volume entitled "In Old Narragansett".

Rowland Robinson was one of the most famous of the Narragansett planters, rich, powerful and domineering. He was noted for the size and dignity of his person. Though hot tempered, he was naturally benevolent and was the one who kept his share of the shipload of negroes and treated them so kindly. His youngest daughter was named Hannah, and, according to all accounts, she must have been a girl of amazing beauty of appearance and liveliness of character. One of the dare-devil soldiers of the time, called Crazy Henry Babcock, who had actually kissed the queen of England, lifted Hannah Robinson's hand to his lips and said: "Pray permit one who has kissed unrebuked the lips of the proudest queen on earth to press for a moment the hand of an angel from Heaven."

These great land-owners had their sons trained by tutors for college and their daughters taught the elegant arts. A Frenchman, named Simons, was a music teacher

in Madam Osborne's school in Newport to which Hannah Robinson was sent. The two young people fell in love with each other, but both knew that the proud old planter would never give his consent to a marriage so unequal socially. After a while the mother discovered what was going on, and, though she did not approve of it, she unwisely made possible the lovers' meetings. Before long the indignant father discovered the music teacher lurking in the gloom beneath his daughter's window. From that time on he kept close watch upon her, but her infatuation continued; in fact she was encouraged in it by the romantic sympathy of friends and neighbors. At last her father incautiously consented that Hannah should go to a ball given by her Aunt. On the way she transferred herself from the family carriage to one containing her lover, in spite of her sister's tears and the appeals of Prince, the faithful negro man-servant. The eloping lovers drove away to Providence and were married.

Her father sought in vain the names of those who had helped her to escape, in order that he might take vengeance, and forbade his family ever to communicate with her. Her husband, when he found that his wife was cut off from her father's wealth, soon deserted her. Meanwhile her oldest sister died of consumption, and her mother had a complete breakdown caused by grief. Her father wrote to her stating that he would take her back if she would tell who had enabled her to elope. But she refused, and her father said: "Then let the foolish thing die where she is." But this was easier for a man of Rowland Robinson's temper to say than for one of his good heart to do. Finally, learning the alarming condition of her health, he

rose suddenly from the dinner table, mounted his horse and rode to Providence. He demanded to know if she would give up the names of those who had assisted her. On her refusal, he rode away, but, unable to live without news of his daughter, he made the journey from Narragansett to Providence every day for several weeks, but without seeing her.

At last her old neighbors who had been in the plot insisted that she should tell their names. Her father entered her room and was horrified to behold her condition. At once riding home, he sent back to Providence in a fast-sailing sloop a hand-litter with which to bear her to his house. It was a lovely morning in June, and four negroes, with her father and Prince riding by her side, slowly bore the dying girl to her home. Various pathetic incidents are told of her journey. At last she was once more in her own room with her weeping mother beside her. As she lay dying, she took a withered spray of life-everlasting from her bosom and said, referring to her faithless husband, "He told me, when he gave it to me, that we must call it, not life-everlasting, but love-everlasting! Lay it with me in my grave, mother, that I may take it to the land where life is everlasting and love never dies." The story says that under her window a whip-poor-will sang, supposed in the Narragansett country to be the harbinger of death, and the next day she died. They buried her near her home, and placed at her head a stone that still marks her resting place. According to her physician, she died, not of any specific disease, but of sorrow. After her death her pet dog pined away, and died, like her, of a broken heart.

So ended this tragedy, which was a tragedy from the beginning, and could not have had a happy ending. Other stories—lighter comedies, grimmer tragedies—exist in our legendary lore; but these examples are enough to indicate the wealth of roses and lilies of romance native to the soil of our Narragansett country.

III

PERSONALITIES

TO the modern traveller along the west shore of the Pettaquamscutt River, as he passes over the highest point of land, known as McSparran Hill, the name of the hill may be associated with nothing more than the remarkable view which he obtains from it. But in the early 18th century in the Narragansett country the name of James McSparran was one to conjure with. In this country of rich land-owners, the religious attachments of the people were, as in Virginia, mainly to the Church of England; and James McSparran was for 36 years the representative of that church. In his portly presence, his dominating personality, and likewise in his foibles, he has been compared to Dr. Samuel Johnson. He certainly had the same power of impressing all who met him. As the representative of the national church, he looked with a certain disdain upon the independents such as the Baptists, the Congregationalists and the Quakers round about him, and, as some members of the Puritan group were among the most learned men in the country, they no doubt eyed him with what Milton calls "retorted scorn". Those who cannot see the past except with the eyes of the present may be shocked to know that James McSparran was a slave-holder, but so were other of the noblest men of his age. He was a kindly master, and deeply grieved for the death of one of his servants.

He is supposed to have been born in Ireland, and historians have taken malicious pleasure in discovering Irish bulls in his diary. He never was quite reconciled to the climate of the Narragansett country, and asserted very unjustly that "we were always frying or freezing". He had that power so coveted by the ministry and their congregations, the ability to attract worshippers. His flock under his hand grew in a few years from seven to three hundred. He was devoted in his ministrations to the Indians and negroes. He was fortunate in his marriage, Mrs. McSparran being a beautiful woman, and, in the words of her husband, "the most pious of women and the best of wives in the world". But she had a temper that caused him to refer to her once as "my poor passionate dear". He makes a charming reference in his diary to a "brief November day" when, after they had been married thirty years, and his wife had just recovered from a serious illness, "my wife and I were making tea in the garden". Painted portraits of this devoted couple may be seen in the rooms of the Rhode Island Historical Society. He was very hospitable and, after the manner of his age, virtually kept open house. As he grew older sometimes his hospitality became a burden, and he remarked, when he had received a dozen visitors at once, "that so much company fatigues me at one time". He was buried under the church over which he had presided, and, that church afterwards having been moved to Wickford, the spot where he rests is now marked by a substantial granite monument, which recalls to memory one of the most picturesque figures of a picturesque time and country.

Says Mrs. Griswold in her book on "Old Wickford": "The Rev. Dr. McSparran, desiring a settled residence, with an eye to the remarkable beauty of a most charming locality, purchased land and built a house at the foot of a high hill, that has ever since been called by his name. On the west rises a double range of hills, running for some distance north and south, and presenting a rugged yet pleasant aspect. The eastern view embraces a broad meadow, leading down to the Pettaquamscutt River, which has its source somewhere near the Gilbert Stuart place in North Kingstown, and pursues its way south for miles, emptying finally into the Atlantic Ocean. It is a brackish stream, subject in its lower course to the salt tides that give it volume and picturesqueness. In some of its southern variations it is broad and deep, but in the more northern localities it deserves the name, Narrow River. Trees and shrubs skirt its banks in many places making it sylvan and beautiful. Beyond it, on the east, lies Boston Neck, with its rich and fertile tract, shining green between the river and Narragansett Bay, over the blue waters of which is Conanicut, and beyond this the harbor of Newport, and the city looming up, with its roofs, and spires, and shipping, in perfect clearness. Away to the southeast, the grand Atlantic swells and foams in the far distance, yet is distinctly visible from the upper rooms of the Glebe, and from the summit of the hills. In this choice spot, where Dr. McSparran fixed his habitation, there was rare enjoyment, not only of a superb nature, but also of the many congenial neighbors and the gifted friends who came from Newport and Boston, and even from Virginia, to share the free hospitality of the Colonial families of Narragansett."

At Tower Hill in the Narragansett country the great founder of Quakerism, George Fox, spoke to a congregation gathered from all the country round. A few years later, (during King Philip's War) the congregation of peaceful Quakers assembled at Tower Hill were slain by the Indians. It was the fury caused by this massacre of non-resistants that prompted the terrible retaliation of the white men in the Great Swamp Fight.

I shall frequently have occasion to refer to the Hazard family, which is still a power in the land, and for several generations has produced representatives surpassing in distinction any of their early ancestors. One of the favorite names in the family was Thomas. They were so numerous — at one time there were 32 in the Narragansett country—that each had to be distinguished by a nickname. Here are a few of them: "College Tom Hazard; Bedford Tom—he lived in Bedford; Barley Tom—he raised large quantities of barley; Virginia Tom —married from Virginia; Little Neck Tom—he lived on Little Neck; Nailor Tom—a blacksmith; Rock Tom—from Rocky Farm; Fiddle Head Tom; Pistol Tom; Young Pistol Tom; Derrick Tom; Short Stephen's Tom; Long Stephen's Tom; Tailor Tom; etc."

Gilbert Stuart, the famous painter of George Washington's portraits, was born in 1755 in the Narragansett country, near the head of the Pettaquamscutt River, in the northeast chamber of a double-ended brick house, which is still to be seen by the visitor. His father raised tobacco and ground it into snuff in a mill.

Stuart began the study of art as a mere child. At thirteen he received an order for two portraits. While still in his teens he spent two years in England and

Scotland. At the age of twenty he sailed again for England, where he remained until 1792. In the meantime he had gained a high reputation as a portrait painter, but the crowning ambition of his life was to paint a portrait of George Washington. This desire was what brought him home, and fortunately for the world he achieved his noble ambition. One of Stuart's portraits of Washington may be seen at the Providence Athenæum, and a portrait of the painter himself, from the brush of his daughter Jane, hangs in the John Hay Library of Brown University.

Stuart was independent, high-spirited and witty, as many anecdotes illustrate. Among them are the two following:

A gentleman married to a rich, but by no means handsome wife, commissioned Stuart to paint her portrait. As the result was not so satisfactory as the husband had hoped, he besought the painter to try again. Stuart did so, but still without giving satisfaction. A discussion ensued, in which both chanced to lose their temper at the same time. At last Stuart's patience gave out and he jumped up, laid down his palette, took a large pinch of snuff, and as he strode up and down the room exclaimed, "What a damned business this is of a portrait painter—you bring him a potato and expect him to paint a peach."

In the other story, which we owe to Dr. Waterhouse, the artist was traveling by stage in England. His fellow-passengers were a number of gentlemen who were strangers to him, and who, finding him very amusing, ventured to ask him who he was, and what was his calling.

Mr Stuart answered with a grave face and a serious tone, that he sometimes dressed gentlemen's and ladies' hair (at that time the high-craped pomatumed hair was

all the fashion). "You are a hair-dresser, then?"

"What!" said he, "do you take me for a barber?"

"I beg your pardon, sir, but I inferred it from what you said. If I mistook you, may I take the liberty to ask what you are, then?"

"Why, I sometimes brush a gentleman's coat, or hat, and sometimes adjust a cravat."

"Oh, you are a valet, then, to some nobleman?"

"A valet! Indeed, sir, I am not. I am not a servant —to be sure, I make coats and waistcoats for gentlemen."

"Oh, you are a tailor?"

"Tailor! Do I look like a tailor? I assure you, I never handled a goose, other than a roasted one."

By this time they were all in a roar. "What the devil are you then?" said one.

"I'll tell you", said Stuart. "Be assured all I have said is literally true. I dress hair, brush hats and coats, adjust a cravat, and make coats, waistcoats and breeches, and likewise boots and shoes, at your service."

"Oh, a boot and shoe maker after all!"

"Guess again, gentlemen; I never handle boots or shoes but for my own feet and legs, yet all I have told you is true."

"We may as well give up guessing."

After checking his laughter, and pumping up a fresh flow of spirits by a large pinch of snuff, he said to them very gravely: "Now, gentlemen, I will not play the fool with you any longer, but will tell you, upon my honor as a gentleman, my *bona fide* profession. I get my bread by making faces." He then screwed his countenance, and twisted the lineaments of his visage in a manner such as Samuel Foote or Charles Mathews might have envied.

When his companions, after loud peals of laughter, had composed themselves, each took credit to himself for having "all the while suspected that the gentleman belonged to the theatre," and they all knew that he must be a comedian by profession; when, to their utter surprise he assured them that he was never on the stage, and very rarely saw the inside of a play-house, or any similar place of amusement. They now all looked at each other in blank astonishment.

Before parting, Stuart said to his companions: "Gentlemen, you will find that all I have said of my various employments is comprised in these words: I am portrait painter. If you will call at John Palmer's, York Building, London, there I shall be ready and willing to brush you a coat or hat, dress your hair *à la mode*, supply you, if need be, with a wig of any fashion or dimension, accommodate you with boots or shoes, give you ruffles or cravats, and make faces for you."

While taking a parting glass at the inn, they begged leave to inquire of their pleasant companion in what part of England he was born; he told them he was not born in England, Wales, Ireland, or Scotland. Here was another puzzle for John Bull.

"Where then?"

"I was born in Narragansett."

"Where's that?"

"Six miles from Pottawomutt, and ten miles from Poppasquash, and about four miles from Conanicut, and not far from the spot where the famous battle with the warlike Pequots was fought."

"In what part of the East Indies is that, sir?"

"East Indies, my dear sir! it is in the State of Rhode Island, between Massachusetts and the Connecticut River."

The Narragansett country, besides having its great painter, has had its share of thinkers and writers. Rowland Gibson Hazard, the elder, was not only the head of the Hazard family in his generation and owner of the woolen mills at Peace Dale, but also a distinguished writer on philosophy and political economy. His brother, Thomas Robinson Hazard, known as Shepherd Tom, was the author of two important works on the history of this region; one is called "Recollections of Olden Times," and the other, "The Jonny Cake Papers". The distinguished representative of the family at the present time is Miss Caroline Hazard, educator, poet, and historian, who for eleven years was President of Wellesley College. Latterly she has made the world brighter by cutting an exquisite gem of song for each of the wildflowers of her native woods and fields. In Kingston resides one of the popular story-writers of today, George Marsh, the author of stirring books on the icy North. Now that he has done justice to the frozen bays, wintry blizzards, and Valley of Voices in Labrador, he should heed Longfellow's motto, "That is best which lieth nearest," and make the Narragansett country live again in romance.

One of the greatest men of this region was General Nathanael Greene, who was born at Pottowomutt in 1742. As everyone knows, he was the close friend of Washington and next to him in ability among the generals of the Revolution. His grandson and biographer, George Washington Greene, was born in East Greenwich and is remembered as a distinguished American historian. He was an

intimate friend of Longfellow, who owned and gave to him the old windmill which Greene moved to form a part of his house.

A man of the Narragansett country, not great perhaps but certainly famous and highly picturesque, was Governor William Sprague. Many remember him; still more have seen his portrait in the Rhode Island State House. He will forever be remembered for his gallantry at the Battle of Bull Run. After the failure which wiped out the greater part of his fortune, he retired to his home, Canonchet, near Narragansett Pier, which is also associated with the memory of his brilliant and equally picturesque wife, Kate Chase Sprague, one of the few American women who have had a direct influence on American politics.

From East Greenwich came General Varnum, who was a graduate in the first class of Brown University in 1769 and, after serving in the Revolution, became the first Federal judge in the famous Western Reserve in Ohio.

In science the Narragansett country can boast of one of the most important practical discoveries made in modern times. At the Rhode Island Experiment Station in Wickford, Dr. A. D. Mead, now Vice-President of Brown University, worked out a solution of the very difficult problem of hatching artificially the eggs of the lobster. The problem had been tried many times and always without success. But his solution, which has since been adopted by the United States Fish Commission, makes it possible once more to cover the sands of our many bays with that most delicious of all sea-foods. Its value in money can hardly be estimated.

In our days we have books that give samples of successfull business letters. Effective love letters are not often made public. Here is one written by Thomas Richardson to Miss Ann Newbury, who afterwards became his wife.

"ye 17th of 6 Mo. 1703.

Dear Ann:

I have long thought for an opportunity to present thee with a few lines whereby (if thou wilt but Pleasure me So much as to read them) thou may in part perceive the Distemper which Continually Greives mee that is (first) the unhappiness that I ly Under by reason of the Great Distance between us so that thereby I am debared from that felicity of Injoying the Company of Thy Person whom I Dearly Love but that is not all for I hope in a Short time to see Thee, (Secondly) that which Greives mee most is the want of Some Assurance of being excepted in to thy honnourable favour (for as I told Thee) if it stand with God's will that I Injoy Thee for my Dearest Friend I should esteeme it a great Blessing even beyond all other this world can afford beside therefore Dear Ann I beseech Thee if thou hast but ye least spark of respect for my happiness honnour mee with a line of Incorredgment Whereoff I take leeve and subscribe myself Thy Constant Lover Until Death."

In the terrible winter of 1777 and 1778 Washington's troops were huddled in their little log huts at Valley Forge. So poor was the service of supplies that the men coming into camp from Whitemarsh, nineteen miles away, were literally bare-foot, and tracked the snow with their blood. Washington appealed to his trusty friend, Jonathan Trumbull of Lebanon, Connecticut (the original

Brother Jonathan), begging him to secure a supply of woolen stockings for his men. Brother Jonathan mounted his horse in a snow storm and rode through New London County appealing to the women to knit the required stockings. He then came over into the Narragansett country to the house of Jonathan J. Hazard. The next morning the two Jonathans sallied forth on horseback and stumped the county. Jonathan J. was decidedly a lady's man. He knew exactly how to approach the fair sex in the most telling way. Not a matron did he see but he complimented her good looks and made moving appeals to her patriotism. Not a little girl did he meet that he did not tell her she was almost as pretty as her mother. Not a little boy whose head he did not pat and tell him in presence of his mamma, that he was undoubtedly born to be a general, a colonel, a captain, or a corporal. The two Jonathans were irresistible. The whole county soon became electrified. Knitting-bees were held on every afternoon and evening and in every quarter; and soon the soldiers were all supplied with stockings, and mostly by the patriotic women of the two counties named. By spring the nice warm stockings had healed the lacerated feet of the patriotic soldiers, who were thus rendered able to march at any moment.

Two Hazard brothers, John and Sylvester, had a bitter quarrel, which continued until Sylvester fell sick and on his death bed relented and sent for his brother John. When John came to his bed-side, Sylvester told him he would like to make up with him before he died, to which John readily assented, whereupon they shook hands and exchanged many friendly greetings. The interview lasted for an hour or more, when John shook his brother's hand,

bidding him an affectionate good-bye. Just as John was closing the door behind him, Sylvester called him back and said, "Now, John, we are good friends, ain't we, just as if nothing had ever happened?" "Yes, brother Sylvester," replied John, "that is just as I feel." "Just so," said Sylvester, "but remember, John, this is only in case I don't get well again. If I do, why then we are to be just as we were before." "Yes, brother Sylvester," said John, "that is just as I understand it, and should have said so before, only I didn't think there was any chance of your ever leaving your bed again alive."

A story characteristic of the piquant personalities bred in Old Narragansett has been told by Alice Morse Earle, and may thus be retold:

Late in the eighteenth century, an American gentleman married in England a well-to-do English lady. They sailed to America bringing with them an ornate and elegant travelling coach. In it they rode with four post-horses from Boston to Albany, New York, and Philadelphia, and back to the little Narragansett town which became their home. This coach they bequeathed with the rest of their property to their only son, a physician, who was famous for a bad temper, and a violent prejudice in favor of everything English, including articles of diet. Once having eaten a surfeit of mince-pie he forthwith banished that favorite dish from his table.

In 1830 he invited all his relatives to Thanksgiving dinner. On the day before the women of the household all were busy preparing for the feast, and among other dainties they had ventured to make the forbidden pies. All went well, until, towards evening, they heard the gouty doctor thumping with his cane on the way to the

kitchen. They stood their ground in apparent calmness. He came and went, seeming not to notice anything unusual, though twenty-six pies were ranged on the buttery shelves. On Thanksgiving morn they awoke to find every pie and pie-plate vanished. There were no traces of a thief, and the disappearance of the pies remained an unsolved mystery. The browbeaten mother passed away, and finally, in 1866, the tyrannical Doctor died. The daughters, at last freed from paternal domination, made a bonfire of their father's most treasured belongings. Among the first to be doomed was the now broken-down English coach. As the first blow of the axe smote it, a rattle as of falling crockery sounded, and the execution was stayed. Behold, an unknown compartment under the driver's seat, and in it twenty-six grimy Staffordshire plates,—the long-lost pie-plates! The spiteful old Doctor had stolen out in the night, fed to the pigs the savory Thanksgiving pies, hidden the plates in the coach box, and taken a long secret delight in the discomfiture of his wife and daughters.

Traditions of Benjamin Franklin linger in the Narragansett country. On his first visit to New England after he had run away to Philadelphia, he stopped at Narragansett on his way to Newport to see his brother. It was in the winter. He was tired, hungry, and cold. As he entered the tavern, he saw a blazing fire with a plenty of seats about it, every one, however, occupied by a person who showed no disposition to give it up. So Franklin said to the stable boy who was bringing in his saddle bags: "Give my horse a quart of oysters." The stable boy replied, "Did I understand you to say oysters or oats?" Franklin answered, "I told you to give my horse a quart

of oysters." The stable boy went out, and all those seated around the fire rushed out after him to see the marvel of a horse eating oysters. When they returned some time after, thoroughly sold, they found Benjamin Franklin firmly settled in the best seat by the fire.

Embarked on these pages we have been following in imagination the stream of Time as it flowed through the past of the Narragansett country. But this region has a very beautiful and romantic present, with its summer resorts, its extensive club estates, and its winter homes on farms and in villages. In those permanent homes, tilling the soil about them or conducting great interests in the city, live many people who are directly descended from the original white settlers. In the Narragansett country one can find all the joys of the shore,—cool breezes, charming walks, delightful rides, and warm ocean currents breaking in snowy surf. But to this one can add the sense of living in a country that for centuries has been the home of our race with all the myriad associations that cling to such a history, and for unknown ages the home of a still older race with its misty legends and traditions. Our story is not one that can be exhausted in three brief chapters or in a summer's residence. The longer one lives in the Narragansett country the more one discovers of interest in both its present and its past. It invites all who read these pages to turn from their shadow pictures to its own realities of scenery, climate, localities, monuments and present day activities.